



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

October 27, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: Secretarial Officers and Field Office Managers

FROM: Peter N. Brush
Acting Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health

SUBJECT: Request for Coordination on Clean Water Implementation Plan

On September 8, 1998, Secretary Richardson indicated the Department's support for the Clean Water Action Plan initiative and directed EH to work closely with DOE's program and field elements to develop a plan for integrating Action Plan goals into DOE's activities. The purpose of this memorandum is to begin the implementation of that charge by establishing points of contact with each of your offices to help develop a DOE implementation plan.

A preliminary review of the Action Plan identified key actions which could provide opportunities for the Department. A draft implementation plan is attached to begin discussions with your offices, and focuses on actions that could be of general interest to the DOE's complex. We recognize that your offices bring different perspectives on the applicability of various key actions, and anticipates substantial modifications to the document (e.g., greater specificity, success measures, milestones, goals, etc.) .

Since the Secretary's memorandum was issued, several offices have expressed strong support for the goals of the Clean Water Action Plan initiative, and have volunteered to assist in the development of the implementation plan. DOE offices also have provided many diverse examples of ongoing activities, such as watershed management approaches, partnerships, technical assistance and information sharing that correlate to key actions in the Action Plan. EH looks forward to collaborating productively with all interested offices. Because no FY 99 funding was allocated to the Department to implement the Action Plan's initiatives, DOE may need to seek opportunities to partner with others to leverage resources to improve water quality within mission and budget constraints for the benefit of all participants, or to integrate water-quality improvement activities into existing operations, so that the burden on our sites is not increased.

The Action Plan identifies many near-term goals. Given the fast turn-around time on some of these activities we are requesting that by November 16, 1998, you identify a DOE Federal staff point of contact to represent your offices in the development of the DOE implementation plan, and to interact with EH staff on Action Plan initiatives for Federal agencies that may affect the Department. Please contact Colleen Ostrowski at (202) 586-4997 [colleen.ostrowski@eh.doe.gov] or Lois Thompson at (202) 586-9581 [lois.thompson@eh.doe.gov] if you have any questions.

Attachment: as stated

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Clean Water Action Plan

Federal Component

Principals' Group

Terry Garcia - DOC Sylvia Baca - DOI
Jim Lyons - USDA Chuck Fox - EPA
Mark Schaefer - DOI Mike Davis - DOD

Federal Steering Committee

Vickie Allin - DOC Marcella Jansen - DOC
Carole Jett - USDA Warren Harper - USDA
Stan Ponce - DOI Cindy Dyballa - DOI
John Meagher - EPA Nikos Singelis - EPA
Louise Cohen - DOD Beverly Getzen - DOD

Tribal Implementation

Kate Vandermoer - DOI
Kathy Gorospe - EPA

Communications

Hollis Hope - EPA
Jane Dodds - USDA

Unified Watershed Assessment

Geoff Grubbs - EPA
Ron Williams - USDA

Animal Feeding Operations

Jeff Lape - EPA
Joe DelVecchio - USDA

Watershed Framework

Louise Wise - EPA
David Cottingham - DOI

Federal Lands Mgt.

Chuck Hunt - DOI
Warren Harper - USDA

Monitoring, Research Information

Andrew Robertson - DOC
Tim Miller - DOI

Coastal Protection & Polluted Runoff

Dov Weitman - EPA
Marcella Jansen - DOC

Wetlands

Michael Davis - DOD

Standards

Marjorie Pitts - EPA
Joe Wilson - DOD

Stewardship Incentives

Robin Heard - USDA
Doug Christensen - USDA

**October 20, 1998 DRAFT
WORKING DRAFT PLAN FOR
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CLEAN WATER ACTION PLAN WITHIN DOE**

Purpose:

Secretary Richardson recently directed EH to develop an implementation plan to identify actions which DOE can take to champion the Clean Water Initiative. EH performed a preliminary analysis of the key actions contained in the Clean Water Action Plan (Action Plan), and prepared this draft DOE implementation plan. The purpose of this draft implementation plan is to provide a starting point for DOE to identify actions and potential opportunities that the Department's program and field offices can take to support the implementation of the Action Plan by Federal agencies on a national level. This draft plan will be revised after DOE offices have had the opportunity to become involved in the plan development process. This draft implementation plan proposes a general framework for implementation of the Action Plan by DOE program and field elements. A number of key actions in the Action Plan may be addressed more effectively by offices at Headquarters, while others may be implemented more appropriately by the field offices.

DOE's implementation plan for the Action Plan will focus on activities specific to Federal lands managed by the Department and the Power Administrations. However, the Department will also participate in "key actions" of the Action Plan involving private energy sector concerns through existing regulatory or interagency processes *and* contribute to the Clean Water Action Plan groups, as appropriate.

Overview of the Clean Water Action Plan:

To commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Clean Water Act, President Clinton announced a new Clean Water initiative in his 1998 State of the Union Address, and released the Clean Water Action Plan on February 19, 1998. (copy attached. The Action Plan also is available electronically on the Internet: <http://www.cleanwater.gov>, along with other materials related to this initiative).

The Action Plan reflects a commitment by Federal agencies to work closely together to improve water quality. Federal agencies assigned lead responsibilities in the Action Plan (i.e., Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of the Interior, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Army Corps of Engineers) have formed an Interagency Steering Committee to develop an Integrated Work Plan to describe assignments to agencies, identify interagency or intra-agency workgroups, define milestones, and establish coordination and communication mechanisms in support of Action Plan implementation. This Interagency Steering Committee in turn has established eleven working groups, as indicated in Figure 1.

Key Strategies of the Clean Water Action Plan:

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The Clean Water Action Plan is built around four key tools to achieve clean water goals: 1) a watershed approach; 2) stronger Federal and State standards; 3) natural resource stewardship and; 4) informed citizens and officials.

1. *Watershed Approach.* The Action Plan establishes a watershed approach as the central theme for setting priorities and taking action to restore and protect the health of the nation's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Four key elements of a watershed approach identified in the Action Plan are: unified watershed assessments, watershed restoration action strategies, watershed pollution prevention, and watershed assistance grants.

2. *Stronger Federal and State Standards.* Within this watershed approach, the Action Plan calls for strong Federal and State standards to improve water quality and protect human health. Examples include: improving assurance that fish and shellfish are safe to eat; expanding control of storm water runoff; supporting the establishment of State and Tribal enforceable authorities to implement polluted runoff controls; defining nutrient reduction goals for water quality; and reducing pollution from animal feeding operations.

3. *Natural Resources Stewardship.* The Action Plan also commits Federal natural resource conservation and environmental agencies to focus resources and technical expertise to enhance natural resources essential to clean water through natural resource stewardship of Federal lands. Examples include: developing a Unified Federal Policy to enhance watershed management for the protection of water quality and the health of aquatic systems on Federal lands and for Federal resource management; accelerating the cleanup rate of impacted watersheds; protecting and restoring wetlands; protecting coastal waters; and providing incentives for private land stewardship.

4. *Informed Citizens and Officials.* The Action Plan calls for Federal agencies to work with States and Tribes to develop and use state-of-the-art systems to communicate meaningful information to the public about water quality conditions in their communities. Additionally, status reports will keep the President, governors, tribal leaders and the public informed of the progress made towards goals for clean water.

Reinvention Directives to Federal Agencies:

The Action Plan directs Federal agencies, working with States, Tribes and the National Watershed Forum to include an assessment of Federal reinvention opportunities in a report on watershed health to be submitted to the President, the governors and the public at the end of the year 2000. Two key actions are associated with this reinvention directive:

- o Federal agencies will prepare an analysis and implementation plan (with milestones and measures) detailing opportunities (including staff training) to orient Federal programs and

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regulatory processes on a watershed basis and make these programs more collaborative and innovative; and

o Federal agencies will coordinate Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals related to watershed management, and identify opportunities for pooling resources, combining budgets, and reporting accomplishments.

Path Forward for DOE Program and Field Offices:

Recommended Actions for the Office of Environment, Safety and Health (EH). EH remains the primary Headquarters Point of Contact on the overall policy development and interagency activities related to the Clean Water Initiative. In fulfilling this role, EH will be responsible for the following actions:

- o Establish contact with the Federal Interagency Steering Committee to keep apprised of the Committee's actions and to provide DOE feedback on the Committee's activities
- o Conduct a review of the Integrated Work Plan, to be finalized by the Interagency Steering Committee, for a further assessment of how these key actions are to be implemented, and their relevance to DOE
- o Develop DOE-specific guidance, as appropriate
- o Facilitate DOE field office contacts with lead Federal agencies responsible for implementation of the provisions of the Action Plan in their watersheds
- o Continue coordination with other DOE program and field offices concerning participation in workgroups related to clean water
- o Expand efforts to establish an electronic network of DOE program and field staff contacts working on clean water issues so that water-related information can be rapidly disseminated and shared.
- o Use the EH-41 web site (<http://tis-nt.eh.doe.gov/oepa>) as one tool for disseminating information related to Action Plan and Interagency Steering Committee activities and products throughout the Department, and for providing links to related web sites
- o Revise the requirements for the Department's General Environmental Protection Program (Order DOE 5400.1) to present a philosophy for an integrated environmental protection program in accordance with the Department's Directives Framework. The revised order (new Order DOE 450.1) would emphasize the need to demonstrate how effluent monitoring and environmental surveillance, pollution prevention, waste minimization, resource protection (e.g., air, water, cultural, ecological elements), and groundwater protection components are linked and optimized within environmental protection programs. The Action Plan's watershed approach is consistent with this philosophy. Elements of this watershed approach may be incorporated into Order 450.1 where appropriate.

Recommended Actions for DOE Program and Field Offices. EH offers the following

recommendations to other DOE offices concerning the Action Plan:

- o Review the three-category summary of key actions below to become familiar with those

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relevant actions that could affect, or provide opportunities for, the Department's operations at your site.

- o Review the 111 Key Actions contained in the Action Plan to determine whether certain other key actions might be of particular interest to specific sites (e.g., key actions related to coastal zone management, fisheries, etc.) [A summary listing of the 111 Key Actions is provided as Attachment 1].

- o Provide feedback to EH on this working draft implementation plan. Identify any additional Key Actions that could affect your site that are not specifically identified in this draft plan, as well as any Key Actions that you might be interested in becoming involved with. Feedback on the proposed approach, as well as your ideas on how the DOE implementation plan can be developed to support the intent of Key Action #110.

- o Add the name of a DOE staff contact for your office to the electronic network of DOE program and field staff contacts working on clean water issues currently under development by EH-41 so that water-related information can be shared faster with your technical staff.

- o Become more familiar with the current health of the watersheds in which DOE sites are situated by using tools such as:

- The Index of Watershed Indicators -- This index organizes and presents aquatic resource information on a watershed basis, and allows you to view national maps or locate your watershed to view its index. It is available in hard copy (EPA-841-R-97-010; September 1997) or via the Internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/surf/iwi>.

- "Surf Your Watershed" (<http://www.epa.gov/surf/>) allows a watershed to be identified by conducting a search based on a known parameter such as zip code, state, county, watershed name, stream name, or hydrologic unit code (UIC) #, etc. Information on local watershed activities and citizens groups can also be found at this web site.

- Information on water-related activities of the U.S. Geological Survey can also be accessed via the Internet at: <http://www.usgs.gov/>.

- o Determine whether or not there are public or governmental activities currently underway in your watershed community. "Surf Your Watershed" is one tool that can be used in this type of effort.

- o Determine whether or not the site's current public outreach programs need to be expanded to accommodate interactions with local government or citizens groups active in local watershed management projects.

- o Consider potential impacts of the clean water activities on budgets, and determine how to factor such impacts into future budgetary requests.

- o Identify opportunities to share environmental monitoring information with States, Tribes and other Federal agencies to affect a watershed approach to monitoring, and where practicable, integrate watershed management considerations into DOE water protection activities.

- o Periodically inform Headquarters (EH-1) on progress related to any clean water partnerships or watershed management activities. Field offices should consider including summaries of such activities in their annual site environmental reports.

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Potential Impacts and Opportunities Contained in the Action Plan Provisions:

Relevant key actions which could impact, or provide opportunities for DOE have been grouped into the three general categories for implementation. These three categories and the major issues in the corresponding key actions are summarized below. (The full text of the Key Actions follows this summary).

Category 1. Key actions for which a DOE Headquarters program office could have lead responsibility for representing the Department:

- o Under EPA's lead, Federal agencies to direct program authorities, technical assistance, etc., to help states, tribes and communities design and implement drinking water source water assessment programs
- o Develop a Unified Federal Policy for watershed management
- o Expand efforts to complete watershed assessments and coordinate activities
- o Emphasize avoidance of wetland losses
- o Participate on White House Wetlands Working Group: 1) to support status and trends report and 2) establish interagency tracking system.
- o Reduce impact of air emissions (e.g., deposition of nitrogen compounds) on water quality
- o Collaborate with other Federal agencies on state-of-the-art water quality information systems
- o Prepare an analysis and implementation plan to orient Federal programs on a watershed basis, and coordinate GPRA goals related to watershed management

Category 2. Key actions for which a partnering effort between a DOE program office(s) and field office(s) could be appropriate:

- o Participate in Federal efforts to model and produce estimates of inputs, nutrient utilization, transport and net contributions of nitrogen and phosphorous
- o Participate in development of tracking system on efforts to reduce nutrient runoff.
- o Standardize monitoring and reporting requirements by point source discharger
- o Support state and local watershed management efforts and identify agency staff to help coordinate Federal watershed programs
- o Improve and restore streams
- o Accelerate rate of cleanup of watersheds affected by abandoned hard rock mines

Category 3. Key actions for which EH, in conjunction with its mission, has the lead responsibility to monitor emerging regulatory requirements and issues, coordinate Department-wide reviews, and submit comments that advocate the Department's position on these activities:

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- o Technical guidance on restoration, creation and enhancement of wetland functions.
- o EPA guidance on anti-degradation policies related to polluted runoff
- o EPA guidance for onsite sewage disposal management programs, and voluntary national standards for onsite management programs developed by EPA
- o Regulations on Phase II of the stormwater program
- o Technical assistance to states and tribes in the development of Nonpoint Source Management Program
- o EPA-established numeric criteria for nutrients based on the type of water body (e.g., river, lake)
- o Support watershed restoration plans

A complete listing of all key actions can be found in the Clean Water Action Plan, and at the web site: <http://www.cleanwater.gov>.

**List of Clean Water Action Plan Key Actions
for which Coordination and Implementation within DOE may be needed:**

Category 1. Key actions for which a DOE Headquarters program office could have lead responsibility for representing the Department:

KEY ACTION #15: In October 1998, EPA will lead an agreement among federal agencies for directing program authorities, technical assistance, data, and enforcement resources to help states, tribes, and local communities design and implement their drinking water source water assessment and protection programs within the unified watershed protection and restoration efforts described in Chapter III. This agreement will draw on program authorities under relevant laws to assign priority to drinking water source water areas needing protection. *(Page 29 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #19: By 1999, DOI and USDA, in consultation with other federal agencies, states and tribes, and other stakeholders, will develop a Unified Federal Policy to enhance watershed management for the protection of water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems on federal lands. *(Page 33 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #33: Federal agencies will expand efforts to complete watershed assessments and to establish compatible data standards and resource classification and inventory methods and

protocols that will allow sharing of ecological, resource condition, land use, and monitoring information among federal and other stakeholders. *(Page 38 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #37: The Corps and EPA, working with other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies, will emphasize avoidance of wetland losses, deterrence of unpermitted losses, and

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enforcement of permit conditions to protect wetlands under Clean Water Act authorities. For unavoidable wetland losses, no overall net loss will be achieved in the regulatory program through mitigation accountability and by improving the reliability of restoration. *(Page 42 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #45: By May 1, 1998, the White House Wetlands Working Group will finalize a plan to use existing inventory and data collection systems to support a single status and trends report by the year 2000. In addition, the White House Wetlands Working Group will convene a peer review panel to evaluate, by June 1998, a plan to track annual changes of less than 100,000 acres in the nation's wetlands. *(Page 43 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #47: The White House Wetlands Working Group will, by October 1999, establish an interagency tracking system (based on the wetlands layer of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure) that will more accurately account for wetland loss, restoration, creation, and enhancement. This task will include establishing accurate baseline data for federal programs that will contribute to net wetland gains. The system will be peer reviewed. *(Page 43 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #75: EPA and NOAA will work with other federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies and others to better quantify the risks associated with atmospheric deposition of nitrogen compounds and other pollutants to water bodies. *(Page 59 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #76: EPA will work through the TMDL program to evaluate the linkage of air emissions to the water quality impacts to help determine appropriate reduction actions. EPA will work with states, tribes, and federal land management agencies to employ both Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act authorities to reduce air deposition of nitrogen compounds and other pollutants that adversely affect water quality. EPA will develop a report on methods for this work by the spring of 1999. *(Page 59 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #92: EPA, DOI, USDA, and NOAA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, will create a new, Internet-based Water Information Network to provide consolidated information on water and watershed programs and services. *(Page 70 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #93: EPA will collaborate with other federal agencies, states, and tribes to develop a state-of-the-art information system, building on the Index of Watershed Indicators, Surf Your Watershed, and STORET to present meaningful information to the public over the Internet about the health of aquatic systems in each of the more than 2,000 watersheds in the country. *(Page 71 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #97: EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, and tribes, will upgrade the National Index of Watershed Indicators in 1998 to support unified watershed assessments and to assist in evaluating the priority-setting process. *(Page 79 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #110: Federal agencies will prepare an analysis and implementation plan (with

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milestones and measures) detailing opportunities (including staff training) to orient federal programs and regulatory processes on a watershed basis and make these programs more collaborative and innovative. *(Page 88 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #111: Federal agencies will coordinate Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals related to watershed management, and identify opportunities for pooling resources, combining budgets, and reporting accomplishments. *(Page 88 of Action Plan)*

Category 2. Key actions for which a partnering effort between a DOE program office and field office could be appropriate:

KEY ACTION #5: EPA will work with NOAA and other federal agencies, states, tribes, and other interested parties to adopt, by December 1999, nationally consistent processes for monitoring water quality and fish tissue, and review EPA guidelines for decision-making on issuance of fish consumption advisories. EPA will support state actions and, after consultation with the state, will issue fish consumption advisories if a state fails to do so. *(Page 25 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #23: The BLM, the U.S. Forest Service, and other federal land management agencies will implement an accelerated program to improve or restore 25,000 miles of stream corridor by 2005. *(Page 34 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #29: Using the approach outlined in the Interdepartmental Abandoned Mine Lands Watershed Initiative, Federal land managers will work in partnership with EPA, state agencies, tribes, private parties, and other interested groups to accelerate the rate of cleanup of watersheds affected by abandoned hard rock mines. With special emphasis on ensuring that viable responsible parties contribute their share of cleanup costs, federal land managers will, beginning in 1999, add three to five watersheds or major mine cleanup actions to the program each year through 2005. The USDA program is expected to meet a substantial portion of this target. USDA targets for 1999 include investigation and cleanup on an estimated 50 hard rock mine sites. Responsible parties have performed over \$30 million in work on federal lands managed by USDA during the past two years. *(Page 36 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #89: DOI, USDA, EPA, and NOAA, in concert with the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and other federal and state agencies, will, by the year 2000,

model and produce estimates of inputs, nutrient utilization (by major source category), transport, and net contributions of nitrogen and phosphorus in watersheds across the nation. *(Page 67 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #90: In 1999, EPA, in collaboration with other federal agencies and states, will initiate a tracking system to report key indicators of the success of programs to reduce nutrient

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runoff to waters. *(Page 68 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #91: In 1999, EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, tribes, and the National Water Quality Monitoring Council, will standardize monitoring and reporting by point source dischargers to support water quality and watershed management information needs. *(Page 68 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #95: Federal agencies will provide assistance or funding support for state efforts to develop unified assessments of watershed health. *(Page 77 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #109: By July 1999, federal agencies will use Watershed Assistance Grants or other appropriate means to support local watershed coordinators and will identify agency staff who can help coordinate federal programs for watershed restoration and protection. *(Page 87 of Action Plan)*

Category 3. Key actions for which EH, in conjunction with its mission, has the lead responsibility to monitor emerging regulatory requirements and issues, coordinate Department-wide reviews, and submit comments that advocate the Department's position on these activities.

KEY ACTION #46: By October 1999, EPA, the Corps, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA will issue technical guidance on the restoration, creation, and enhancement of wetland functions. *(Page 43 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #70: EPA and other federal agencies will provide technical assistance to states and tribes to help upgrade polluted runoff programs to address all nine key program elements. Beginning in FY 1999, EPA and all states, territories, and tribes will expedite incorporation of the nine key elements established in national guidance into section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Programs. Also in FY 1999, EPA will advise states and tribes that, beginning in FY 2000, EPA will award any section 319 monies exceeding the \$100 million authorized level only to those states and tribes that have incorporated all nine key elements into an approved section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program. *(Page 55 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #71: EPA will develop guidance that more specifically defines expectations and procedures for states to follow in fully implementing anti-degradation policies related to polluted runoff and will publish final guidance on this subject by December 1998. *(Page 56 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #74: EPA will establish, by the year 2000, numeric criteria for nutrients (i.e., nitrogen and phosphorus) that are tailored to reflect the different types of water bodies (e.g., lakes, rivers, and estuaries) and the different ecoregions of the country, and will assist states in adopting numeric water quality standards based on these criteria over the following three years. If a state does not adopt appropriate nutrient standards, EPA will begin the process of promulgating nutrient standards. *(Page 59 of Action Plan)*

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KEY ACTION #77: In 1998, EPA will publish technical guidance providing detailed information on onsite sewage disposal management programs, performance standards, water conservation techniques, and alternative and innovative onsite disposal system designs. EPA will also, in 1999, develop voluntary national standards for onsite management programs that address siting, performance, design, and maintenance of these systems. *(Page 60 of Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #79: EPA will publish final regulations in 1999 on Phase II of the storm water program, consider public comments on the proposal, and work with states, tribes, municipalities, and the regulated community to make sure that storm water control measures are implemented as required. *(Page 61 of Action Plan)*

Attachment 1
SUMMARY OF CLEAN WATER ACTION PLAN'S KEY ACTIONS

The Clean Water Action Plan is based upon four tools to achieve clean water goals: a Watershed Approach; Strong Federal and State Standards; Natural Resources Stewardship; and Informed Citizens and Officials. The Key Actions contained in the Action Plan are further delineated into eight categories. These eight categories are identified as headings for the Key Actions that follow. EH has numbered and provided page information for the 111 Key Actions to facilitate reference to specific actions.

CLEAN WATERS: HEALTHY PEOPLE

KEY ACTION #1: EPA and NOAA will conduct a national survey of mercury and other contaminant levels in fish and shellfish throughout the country during the period 1998-2000. This effort will be coordinated with state and tribal efforts to maximize geographic coverage. *(Page 25 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #2: By 1998, EPA will develop a multimedia strategy addressing mercury and other persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic pollutants that cannot be fully addressed through single media controls and approaches. The strategy will include enforcement and compliance efforts to address noncompliance associated with contaminated fish and shellfish areas. *(Page 25 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #3: EPA will release its Contaminated Sediment Strategy that will coordinate its programs to address the following goals: (1) preventing the volume of contaminated sediment from increasing; (2) reducing the volume of existing contaminated sediment; (3) ensuring that sediment dredging and disposal are managed in an environmentally sound manner consistent with the needs of waterborne commerce; and (4) developing scientifically sound sediment management tools for use in pollution prevention, source control, remediation, and dredged material management. *(Page 25 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #4: In 1998, EPA will initiate place-based contaminated sediment recovery demonstration projects in five watersheds selected from those identified in EPA's National Inventory of Sediment Quality as being of the greatest concern. Remediation efforts will be coordinated with federal natural resource trustees. *(Page 25 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #5: EPA will work with NOAA and other federal agencies, states, tribes, and other interested parties to adopt, by December 1999, nationally consistent processes for monitoring water quality and fish tissue, and review EPA guidelines for decision-making on issuance of fish consumption advisories. EPA will support state actions and, after consultation with the state, will issue fish consumption advisories if a state fails to do so. *(Page 25 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #6: The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) will contribute additional funding and coordinate epidemiology studies in the Great Lakes to improve understanding of the health effects associated with exposure to contaminants in locally caught fish. *(Page 26 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #7: In 1998, EPA and ATSDR will develop a brochure in Spanish and Asian languages explaining how to reduce the health risks of exposure to contaminants in locally caught fish and shellfish. The brochure will be given to pediatricians, obstetricians, and health care organizations for distribution to the public, particularly women with children. *(Page 26 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #8: In 1998, EPA and ATSDR will develop outreach materials for health care professionals, identifying the health risks of eating noncommercial fish and shellfish contaminated with PCBs and explaining how women and children can reduce these risks. *(Page 26 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #9: In 1998, NOAA will report on the status of shellfish bed conditions nationally and the factors contributing to areas of harvest limitation. This report will link

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shellfish bed conditions and watersheds for use in assessments. *(Page 26 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #10: EPA will direct enforcement and compliance assistance efforts, together with state and local authorities, at regulated sources contributing to conditions leading to closures of shellfish areas. These efforts will address sanitary sewer overflows, combined sewer overflows, storm water discharges, wet-weather discharges that contain substantial amounts of contaminants, and other point sources that are not discharging in compliance with applicable requirements. *(Page 26 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #11: In early 1998, EPA will release a BEACH Action Plan describing priority actions for federal, state, tribal, and local implementation of beach monitoring and notification programs. The BEACH Action Plan will include priority research, training, and guidance needs for the implementing agencies. *(Page 27 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #12: In May 1998, EPA will release the first Internet-based, federal database on beach advisories and closings in the United States. In addition to advisories and closings, this database will list which beaches provide monitoring and which do not. *(Page 27 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #13: In 1998, EPA will develop a specific plan and schedule for the development of a new generation of microbiological criteria for nationally protective beach water quality standards. New standards will be issued by 2003. The plan will include necessary research and interagency coordination, and describe the transition from the total coliforms/fecal coliforms currently in most state and tribal water quality standards to EPA's recommended E.coli and Enterococcus criteria, and new indicators for ear, skin, and respiratory infections. To ensure a nationally consistent system, EPA will establish a schedule for federal promulgation of standards where states fail to enact protective measures. *(Page 27 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #14: EPA will direct enforcement and compliance assistance efforts, together with state and local authorities, at regulated sources contributing to beach closings. These efforts will address sanitary sewer overflows, combined sewer overflows, storm water discharges, wet weather discharges that contain substantial amounts of contaminants, and other point sources that are not discharging in compliance with applicable requirements. *(Page 28 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #15: In October 1998, EPA will lead an agreement among federal agencies for directing program authorities, technical assistance, data, and enforcement resources to help states, tribes, and local communities design and implement their drinking water source water assessment and protection programs within the unified watershed protection and restoration efforts described in Chapter III. This agreement will draw on program authorities under relevant laws to assign priority to drinking water source water areas needing protection. *(Page 29 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #16: EPA will increase enforcement and compliance assistance in those watersheds where sources of drinking water are contaminated or threatened. *(Page 29 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #17: In response to the requirements of the Food Quality Protection Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, EPA will publish in 1998 a strategy for evaluating chemicals for their potential to cause effects through endocrine disruption, will implement the strategy no later than 1999, and provide Congress with a status report on this work by the end of 2000. *(Page 29 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #18: EPA will address recommendations in the National Academy of Sciences' report on endocrine disruption and develop an appropriate national strategy. *(Page 30 of the Action Plan)*

ENHANCED NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP

KEY ACTION #19: By 1999, DOI and USDA, in consultation with other federal agencies, states and tribes, and other stakeholders, will develop a Unified Federal Policy to

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enhance

watershed management for the protection of water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems on federal lands. *(Page 33 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #20: Substantially increase maintenance of forest roads and trails on federal lands to protect water quality beginning in 1998; relocate and improve water quality protection for over 2,000 miles of roads and trails per year through 2005; and decommission or obliterate 5,000 miles per year by 2002. *(Page 34 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #21: The U.S. Forest Service will publish new forest transportation regulations by 1999. Stakeholder involvement will be solicited in the development of these regulations, which will consider public needs, funding, and scientific and environmental information in determining the size, purpose, and extent of the forest transportation system. In 1998, a temporary moratorium on new road construction in roadless areas of greater than 5,000 acres will be in effect for 18 months or until the U.S. Forest Service publishes new forest transportation regulations. *(Page 34 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #22: In consultation with other federal agencies and states, in 1999, EPA will consider whether to revise Clean Water Act permit regulations relative to forest roads and develop a pilot permit program for forest roads on federal lands. *(Page 34 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #23: The BLM, the U.S. Forest Service, and other federal land management agencies will implement an accelerated program to improve or restore 25,000 miles of stream corridor by 2005. *(Page 34 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #24: By 2000, land management agencies will implement a strategy for assessing threats to watersheds and water quality stemming from forest health, and for targeting fuel treatments or other techniques to priority watersheds most threatened by damage from disease and wildfire. *(Page 35 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #25: The U.S. Forest Service, the BLM, and EPA will develop and implement a strategy for assisting states and tribes in watershed-based assessments and actions where urban-rural interactions threaten forest health and water quality. *(Page 35 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #26: The U.S. Forest Service will expand implementation of forest health survey and monitoring within all 50 states by 2005. *(Page 35 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #27: The U.S. Forest Service and the BLM will accelerate range allotment planning, implement management changes, and accelerate restoration actions to restore the sustainability, function, and diversity of rangeland ecosystems. This process will be accomplished through improved allotment management decisions; development by the year 2000 of a standardized rangeland health inventory, classification, and monitoring system in accordance with the BLM, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Forest Service; adoption of comprehensive guidelines for managing resources now at risk; and restoration of stream, riparian, and other degraded areas. *(Page 35 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #28: By 2002, the U.S. Forest Service, the BLM, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service will develop and implement rangeland vegetation classifications; establish baseline inventory data and an interagency training program for rangeland inventory and monitoring; and aggressively begin to implement management changes and restoration activities to eliminate ecological, management, or erosion problems that cause degraded water quality. *(Page 35 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #29: Using the approach outlined in the Interdepartmental Abandoned Mine Lands Watershed Initiative, Federal land managers will work in partnership with EPA, state agencies, tribes, private parties, and other interested groups to accelerate the rate of cleanup of watersheds affected by abandoned hard rock mines. With special emphasis on ensuring that viable responsible parties contribute their share of cleanup costs, federal land managers will, beginning in 1999, add three to five watersheds or major mine cleanup

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actions to the program each year through 2005. The USDA program is expected to meet a substantial portion of this target. USDA targets for 1999 include investigation and cleanup on an estimated 50 hard rock mine sites. Responsible parties have performed over \$30 million in work on federal lands managed by USDA during the past two years. *(Page 36 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #30: By 1999, federal land management agencies and EPA will forge a partnership, consistent with the watershed-based strategy described above and building on the existing Memorandum of Understanding, to help resolve issues and enhance review, planning, and operations for active mining operations. *(Page 36 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #31: By 2000, the Office of Surface Mining in DOI, in cooperation with EPA and land management agencies, will increase by 50 percent the number of cooperative projects to clean up rivers and streams polluted by coal mine drainage. The Office of Surface Mining will continue to work with key local stakeholders, including watershed associations, state, and tribal agencies, and local units of government. *(Page 37 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #32: EPA will revise effluent guidelines to better address coal mining in arid western areas, and will develop new effluent guidelines to address coal re-mining operations. *(Page 37 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #33: Federal agencies will expand efforts to complete watershed assessments and to establish compatible data standards and resource classification and inventory methods and protocols that will allow sharing of ecological, resource condition, land use, and monitoring information among federal and other stakeholders. *(Page 38 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #34: By 2000, the U.S. Forest Service, the BLM, USGS, and EPA will test the watershed analysis process developed under the Northwest Forest Plan for subsequent application in targeted watersheds, representing a diversity of major ecosystem types throughout the country. *(Page 39 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #35: By 2000, the Bureau of Reclamation, with assistance from USGS, will assess water quality of reservoirs and streams affected by the Bureau's operations and, by 2003, develop strategies in cooperation with others for water quality improvements. *(Page 39 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #36: Federal land and resource management agencies will work with states and tribes to immediately begin a review of existing processes to ensure that the issuance and renewal of use authorizations and licenses, adequately address water quality protection, monitoring, and compliance measures and will revise and upgrade those processes as needed by 2000. By 2005, federal agencies will amend use authorizations and licenses, as authorities allow, to: require appropriate monitoring; protect or enhance watershed and stream health; use specific state and tribal best management practice requirements; and ensure compliance with water quality standards. *(Page 39 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #37: The Corps and EPA, working with other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies, will emphasize avoidance of wetland losses, deterrence of unpermitted losses, and enforcement of permit conditions to protect wetlands under Clean Water Act authorities. For unavoidable wetland losses, no overall net loss will be achieved in the regulatory program through mitigation accountability and by improving the reliability of restoration. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #38: The Administration will work with Congress to expand the Wetlands Reserve Program to allow up to 250,000 acres of wetlands each year. In conjunction with other agricultural incentive programs, this initiative will enable the enrollment of 150,000 acres for wetlands restoration in 2005 and subsequent years. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #39: By 2005, the Corps will increase by at least 50 percent the wetlands restored and enhanced through its programs. This includes wetlands restored as part of the President's "Riverine Ecosystem and Flood Hazard Mitigation" program in the FY 1999 budget and succeeding years. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #40: The Corps, EPA, USDA, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA, through the Institute for Water Resources, will initiate a review of the effectiveness of

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wetlands mitigation banking by an independent body, such as the National Academy of Sciences or a science/environmental advisory board by the year 2000. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #41: By 2005, working with Wetlands and River Corridor Restoration Partners, a group of 30 governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in habitat restoration, EPA will have cooperated on wetland projects in 500 watersheds. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #42: By 2005, NOAA will increase the acreage of wetlands restored annually, to improve coastal water quality and benefit living marine resources, by encouraging wetlands restoration planning in state coastal zone management programs, and by continuing state and local partnerships under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Program settlement funds and community-based restoration funds. NOAA also will work with other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies to encourage the use of existing wetland restoration programs in coastal areas. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #43: In the enforcement programs, EPA and the Corps will emphasize restoration and mitigation of wetlands as remedies for section 404 violations. EPA will also use Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) that restore wetlands as remedies in programs enforcing non-404 requirements of law. Compliance with permit conditions will also be monitored and improved. *(Page 42 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #44: The Federal Highway Administration will increase net wetlands acreage resulting from federal-aid highway projects by 50 percent in 10 years, and will finance wetland mitigation projects for remediation of adverse effects from past federal aid highway improvements when such projects are determined to be appropriate and reasonable by the project sponsors. *(Page 43 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #45: By May 1, 1998, the White House Wetlands Working Group will finalize a plan to use existing inventory and data collection systems to support a single status and trends report by the year 2000. In addition, the White House Wetlands Working Group will convene a peer review panel to evaluate, by June 1998, a plan to track annual changes of less than 100,000 acres in the nation's wetlands. *(Page 43 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #46: By October 1999, EPA, the Corps, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and NOAA will issue technical guidance on the restoration, creation, and enhancement of wetland functions. *(Page 43 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #47: The White House Wetlands Working Group will, by October 1999, establish an interagency tracking system (based on the wetlands layer of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure) that will more accurately account for wetland loss, restoration, creation, and enhancement. This task will include establishing accurate baseline data for federal programs that will contribute to net wetland gains. The system will be peer reviewed. *(Page 43 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #48: The Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, the Corps, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and EPA, coordinating with states and tribes, will improve access to information on programs for wetlands and other habitat. Such information will be made available to geographic-based planners through toll-free help lines, the Internet, one-stop information centers, dedicated staff for outreach, and/or newsletters and other publications. *(Page 45 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #49: Watershed Assistance Grants will be established to ensure that those whose wetland interests may be affected by planning have the means to participate in the process. Because active involvement requires a financial investment that may exceed the capability of some interests, these grants would contribute on an as-needed basis to the cost of participation. *(Page 45 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #50: The Corps, NOAA, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Park Service, and EPA will provide technical

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and/or financial assistance to states and tribes to integrate habitat considerations into geographic-based planning programs, and will offer incentives to programs that appropriately balance clean water and habitat factors. *(Page 45 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #51: NOAA and EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, will develop a coordinated response system that supports state and local efforts in coastal waters for major events, such as harmful algae blooms and *Pfiesteria* outbreaks. Where appropriate, EPA will work with state and local governments to help focus existing enforcement authorities on reducing pollutant discharges contributing to such events. *(Page 46 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #52: NOAA and EPA will support the efforts of coastal states to reduce polluted runoff that may contribute to local or regional *Pfiesteria* problems, by providing technical and financial assistance for implementation of state coastal nonpoint pollution control programs under the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments and state nonpoint source management programs under the Clean Water Act. *(Page 46 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #53: NOAA, DOI, EPA, USDA, and other federal agencies will work with states, academia, and others to implement the current National Harmful Algal Bloom Research and Monitoring Strategy. The interagency strategy addresses characterization of environmental conditions likely to support toxic species, predictions of the onset of conditions conducive to bloom formation, and means to prevent, control, or mitigate their impacts. *(Page 46 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #54: NOAA and Regional Fishery Management Councils will amend Fisheries Management Plans, including the identification of essential fish habitat, by October 1998. The amended Fisheries Management Plans will include options and recommendations to minimize adverse effects caused by state or federal activities. *(Page 47 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #55: The Corps and EPA will expand their efforts to promote the beneficial use of dredged materials to restore critical coastal habitats. *(Page 47 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #56: NOAA and EPA will work with coastal states and territories to ensure that they have developed programs to reduce polluted runoff in coastal areas and that these programs are at least conditionally approved by June 1998 and that all programs are fully approved by December 1999, with appropriate state-enforceable policies and mechanisms. *(Page 47 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #57: NOAA and EPA will further develop and support partnerships with state, tribal, and local governments and organizations to provide technical assistance and information to local decision makers in coastal areas. NOAA and EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, will broadly share lessons learned from National Estuary Programs and the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. NOAA, in cooperation with USDA, will expand the Nonpoint Education of Municipal Officials program. *(Page 47 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #58: NOAA, EPA, USDA, DOI, and other federal departments and agencies will use 1998, the International Year of the Ocean, to educate citizens, landowners, and consumers across the nation about their reliance and impacts on coastal waters. *(Page 48 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #59: NOAA and EPA will lead the development of a multi-agency Coastal Research Strategy to be issued in 1999. *(Page 48 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #60: NOAA, EPA, DOI, and USDA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, and tribes, will develop a plan by the end of 1999 for coordinated monitoring of coastal waters and will, by the end of 2000, develop a comprehensive report to the public on the condition of the nation's coastal waters. *(Page 49 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #61: Before December 1999, USDA, EPA, DOI, the Corps, Tennessee Valley Authority, NOAA, and other partners will showcase the application of stream corridor

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restoration technology in 12 demonstration project areas for water quality improvement. *(Page 49 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #62: By 2002, USDA, working with federal, state, tribal, and private partners, will establish two million miles of conservation buffers on agricultural lands to prevent

pollution and help meet water quality goals. USDA will review and increase, where appropriate, the incentives available under the Conservation Reserve Program continuous sign-up, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program, and the Forestry and Stewardship Incentives Programs to ensure that incentives are adequate to establish two million miles of buffers by 2002. *(Page 50 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #63: USDA will reserve four million acres from the Conservation Reserve Program for the establishment of conservation buffers. *(Page 50 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #64: USDA, working through a National Conservation Buffer Team and the National Buffer Council, will pursue partnerships with the private sector, farm and conservation organizations, and states, tribes, and federal agencies to develop a coordinated campaign to encourage landowners to put conservation buffers on their farms and ranches. *(Page 50 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #65: USDA will issue a Federal Register notice by early 1998 announcing the availability of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and providing programmatic and administrative guidance to states for submitting proposals for CREP agreements. *(Page 50 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #66: USDA will work with states to help develop proposals leading to as many CREP agreements as practicable to address critical water quality, soil erosion, and fish and wildlife habitat needs, including those for threatened and endangered species. *(Page 51 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #67: USDA will work with agricultural producers to encourage the use of marketing and promotion orders to assist them in meeting their pollution prevention objectives. *(Page 52 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #68: USDA will work with private insurance companies and foundations to review the feasibility of providing an insurance program that enables producers to offset risks of utilizing new technologies to manage fertilizers and pesticides to prevent pollution. USDA will assist in developing public-private partnerships that facilitate risk protection policies and programs for producers adopting pollution prevention systems. *(Page 53 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #69: USDA will lead a task force to work with agricultural producers, businesses, and interested constituencies to explore the feasibility of defining standards and establishing a "Blue Water" marketing recognition program to identify agricultural products produced under sound environmental management guidelines. *(Page 53 of the Action Plan)*

STRONG POLLUTED RUNOFF CONTROLS

KEY ACTION #70: EPA and other federal agencies will provide technical assistance to states and tribes to help upgrade polluted runoff programs to address all nine key program elements. Beginning in FY 1999, EPA and all states, territories, and tribes will expedite incorporation of the nine key elements established in national guidance into section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Programs. Also in FY 1999, EPA will advise states and tribes that, beginning in FY 2000, EPA will award any section 319 monies exceeding the \$100 million authorized level only to those states and tribes that have incorporated all nine key elements into an approved section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program. *(Page 55 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #71: EPA will develop guidance that more specifically defines expectations and procedures for states to follow in fully implementing anti-degradation policies

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related to polluted runoff and will publish final guidance on this subject by December 1998. *(Page 56 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #72: EPA and, in coastal states and territories NOAA, will promote by the year 2000 the establishment of enforceable state and tribal authorities needed to ensure the implementation of nonpoint source controls to achieve water quality standards. EPA, in consultation with NOAA, will publish guidance describing existing and potential models of enforceable authority related to polluted runoff and will assist states and tribes in this effort. *(Page 57 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #73: EPA will work with states to increase the number and dollar amount of loans made through clean water revolving loan fund programs for priority projects to prevent polluted runoff, with the goal of increasing the annual percentage of funds loaned for this purpose to at least 10 percent (or about \$200 million) by the year 2001. EPA will also work with states toward the goal of increasing to 25 the number of states using integrated priority-setting systems to make clean water funding decisions by the year 2000. *(Page 57 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #74: EPA will establish, by the year 2000, numeric criteria for nutrients (i.e., nitrogen and phosphorus) that are tailored to reflect the different types of water bodies (e.g., lakes, rivers, and estuaries) and the different ecoregions of the country, and will assist states in adopting numeric water quality standards based on these criteria over the following three years. If a state does not adopt appropriate nutrient standards, EPA will begin the process of promulgating nutrient standards. *(Page 59 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #75: EPA and NOAA will work with other federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies and others to better quantify the risks associated with atmospheric deposition of nitrogen compounds and other pollutants to water bodies. *(Page 59 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #76: EPA will work through the TMDL program to evaluate the linkage of air emissions to the water quality impacts to help determine appropriate reduction actions. EPA will work with states, tribes, and federal land management agencies to employ both Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act authorities to reduce air deposition of nitrogen compounds and other pollutants that adversely affect water quality. EPA will develop a report on methods for this work by the spring of 1999. *(Page 59 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #77: In 1998, EPA will publish technical guidance providing detailed information on onsite sewage disposal management programs, performance standards, water conservation techniques, and alternative and innovative onsite disposal system designs. EPA will also, in 1999, develop voluntary national standards for onsite management programs that address siting, performance, design, and maintenance of these systems. *(Page 60 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #78: EPA will promote the use, where appropriate, of centralized management of decentralized wastewater systems. This initiative will include financial and technical support of state, tribal, and local efforts to consolidate management of decentralized wastewater programs so that they are consistently managed and administered. Beginning in 1999, EPA will also fund projects that demonstrate how to overcome barriers to decentralized sewage management. EPA will publish guidance on the appropriate use of state loan funds to support these systems in 1999. *(Page 60 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #79: EPA will publish final regulations in 1999 on Phase II of the storm water program, consider public comments on the proposal, and work with states, tribes, municipalities, and the regulated community to make sure that storm water control measures are implemented as required. *(Page 61 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #80: EPA will focus its compliance assistance and enforcement resources on addressing noncompliance with existing Phase I storm water requirements by targeting priority watersheds where storm water is of concern. *(Page 61 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #81: EPA will publish and, after public comments, implement an AFO Strategy for important and necessary EPA actions on standards and permits by March 1998. *(Page 62 of the Action Plan)*

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KEY ACTION #82: EPA and USDA will jointly develop a unified national strategy to minimize the environmental and public health impacts of AFOs. This Unified Strategy will be published for public review and comment in July 1998 and will be finalized in November 1998. *(Page 64 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #83: In the current effort to develop federal policies and actions to strengthen America's communities, the Interagency Work Group on Sustainable Communities will identify new mechanisms and needed revisions to existing policy to support locally initiated smart growth efforts that have benefits for water quality. *(Page 64 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #84: EPA will develop a means to credit pollution load reductions from local growth management efforts in the Total Maximum Daily Loads submitted by states and tribes to EPA under the Clean Water Act. *(Page 64 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #85: The Council on Environmental Quality will develop guidance to ensure that National Environmental Policy Act analysis fully considers the secondary impacts that can be avoided by smart growth policies. *(Page 64 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #86: An interagency task force will, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, identify and assess tax incentive proposals related to water pollution prevention and natural resource enhancement and identify potential changes, with any appropriate offsets, for proposal in future budgets. *(Page 65 of the Action Plan)*

IMPROVE INFORMATION AND CITIZENS' RIGHT TO KNOW

KEY ACTION #87: The National Water Quality Monitoring Council will, by the end of 2000, compare sampling and laboratory methods and protocols leading to performance-based acceptable methods; establish reference parameters for specific monitoring purposes; identify core environmental indicators; establish consistent use of biological metrics; and develop guidelines on quality assurance and control. *(Page 67 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #88: The National Water Quality Monitoring Council, in coordination with the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, will publish a national report describing current state of monitoring and models for assessing sources and impacts of polluted runoff; critical gaps and targeted areas in need of monitoring and modeling; priority polluted runoff research and assessment projects; and recommendations for improvements, including institutional roles and reporting of results at watershed, tribal, state, and national levels. *(Page 67 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #89: DOI, USDA, EPA, and NOAA, in concert with the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and other federal and state agencies, will, by the year 2000, model and produce estimates of inputs, nutrient utilization (by major source category), transport, and net contributions of nitrogen and phosphorus in watersheds across the nation. *(Page 67 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #90: In 1999, EPA, in collaboration with other federal agencies and states, will initiate a tracking system to report key indicators of the success of programs to reduce nutrient runoff to waters. *(Page 68 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #91: In 1999, EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, tribes, and the National Water Quality Monitoring Council, will standardize monitoring and reporting by point source dischargers to support water quality and watershed management information needs. *(Page 68 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #92: EPA, DOI, USDA, and NOAA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, will create a new, Internet-based Water Information Network to provide consolidated information on water and watershed programs and services. *(Page 70 of the Action Plan)*

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KEY ACTION #93: EPA will collaborate with other federal agencies, states, and tribes to develop a state-of-the-art information system, building on the Index of Watershed Indicators, Surf Your Watershed, and STORET to present meaningful information to the public over the Internet about the health of aquatic systems in each of the more than 2,000 watersheds in the country. *(Page 71 of the Action Plan)*

UNIFIED WATERSHED ASSESSMENTS

KEY ACTION #94: States should work with other appropriate agencies, governments, organizations, and the public to create Unified Watershed Assessments that identify watersheds that do not meet clean water and other natural resource goals and where prevention action is needed to sustain water quality and aquatic resources. Federal agencies will ask

state conservationists and state environmental agency leaders to jointly convene this process and to involve a full range of appropriate parties. *(Page 77 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #95: Federal agencies will provide assistance or funding support for state efforts to develop unified assessments of watershed health. *(Page 77 of the Action Plan)*

RESTORE AQUATIC SYSTEM HEALTH ON A WATERSHED BASIS

KEY ACTION #96: By October 1998, states and tribes should work with appropriate agencies, organizations, and the public to define watershed restoration priorities, with special attention to watersheds most in need of restoration and protection. This schedule must be coordinated with section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and provide an opportunity to bundle Total Maximum Daily Loads on a watershed scale. The schedule should identify the highest priority watersheds to be addressed in the first two years (through 2000). *(Page 78 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #97: EPA, in cooperation with other federal agencies, states, and tribes, will upgrade the National Index of Watershed Indicators in 1998 to support unified watershed assessments and to assist in evaluating the priority-setting process. *(Page 79 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #98: States and tribes should work with public agencies and private-sector organizations and citizens to develop, based on the initial schedule for the first two years, Watershed Restoration Action Strategies, for watersheds most in need of restoration. Federal agencies will focus current financial resources as appropriate to support watershed restoration plans. New federal resources available in FY 1999 will be targeted to support implementation of actions called for in Watershed Restoration Action Strategies. *(Page 80 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #99: Federal agencies will develop guidance on targeting expanded funding for FY1999. *(Page 81 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #100: Federal land and resource management agencies will expand assistance and provide assessment information and tools to states and tribes developing and implementing TMDLs on federal lands. *(Page 81 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #101: The Bureau of Indian Affairs will provide technical assistance, grants and/or contracts to improve water quality on tribal lands. *(Page 81 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #102: EPA and USDA, in consultation with NOAA, DOI, and other federal agencies, the states, and the National Watershed Forum, will submit a Watershed Restoration Progress Report to the President, the nation's governors, tribal leaders, and the public, evaluating progress in implementing restoration actions and recommending any actions needed to improve progress toward meeting clean water goals. Reports will be provided at the end of the year 2000 and periodically thereafter. *(Page 81 of the Action Plan)*

BUILD STRONG PARTNERSHIPS TO SPEED RESTORATION AND PROTECTION

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KEY ACTION #103: Beginning in FY 1999, federal agencies will coordinate with states and tribes to provide small grants to enable organizations to build watershed partnerships and advance watershed restoration efforts. *(Page 84 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #104: To support local organizations and citizens in locally based watershed protection efforts, and to encourage the organization of such groups nationwide, EPA, USDA, DOI, NOAA, and other federal agencies will increase information and technical assistance available to these groups. *(Page 84 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #105: EPA, USDA, DOI, NOAA, and other federal agencies will work with the present sponsors of the national watershed award to review options for broadening and expanding the awards program, including a watershed award in each state and awards for innovative solutions to specific problems. *(Page 85 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #106: In 1998, federal agencies will complete an inventory of watershed training programs. Relevant offerings will be promoted through the Watershed Academy and

through other means, as appropriate. From 1999 on, EPA and other federal agencies will join together with states, territories, tribes and other organizations to expand and improve watershed training offerings. *(Page 86 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #107: By October 1998, EPA will develop guidance to support cooperative efforts to ensure that compliance assistance and enforcement is used to effectively address noncompliance problems on a priority watershed basis. *(Page 86 of the Action Plan)*

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

KEY ACTION #108: The Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture, Interior, Commerce, and Defense, and the Administrator of EPA, in cooperation with states and tribes, will convene a National Watershed Forum to coordinate watershed assessment, restoration, and protection. *(Page 87 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #109: By July 1999, federal agencies will use Watershed Assistance Grants or other appropriate means to support local watershed coordinators and will identify agency staff who can help coordinate federal programs for watershed restoration and protection. *(Page 87 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #110: Federal agencies will prepare an analysis and implementation plan (with milestones and measures) detailing opportunities (including staff training) to orient federal programs and regulatory processes on a watershed basis and make these programs more collaborative and innovative. *(Page 88 of the Action Plan)*

KEY ACTION #111: Federal agencies will coordinate Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) goals related to watershed management, and identify opportunities for pooling resources, combining budgets, and reporting accomplishments. *(Page 88 of the Action Plan)*